

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE # 2007-0048

BAR Meeting
April 4, 2007

ISSUE: After-the-fact replacement windows and new rear door

APPLICANT: Hart Washington Street Partnership

LOCATION: 305 North Washington Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy of more appropriate replacement materials.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for an after-the-fact installation of replacement windows and a new rear door at the three story rowhouse at 305 North Washington Street.

Replacement Windows

Double hung simulated divided light wood windows have been installed in the rowhouse replacing the previous single pane wood windows.

New Door

The applicant proposes to replace the existing rear door with a new metal door. The rear of the house is visible from Brockett's Alley directly to the south of the rowhouse.

II. HISTORY:

305 North Washington Street is a three story frame rowhouse that is part of Brockett's Row and was originally constructed in 1808 by Robert Brockett and restyled in a vernacular Greek Revival style.

III. ANALYSIS:

Replacement Windows

At the outset for a discussion of this docket item, staff notes that this residential property fronts directly on North Washington Street which is part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway as it passes through Alexandria. The Board has been mindful of efforts to maintain the memorial character of the Parkway.

Windows are one of the dominant visual elements of a historic building. The *Design Guidelines*, recognize this fact and state: "...Replacement windows should be appropriate to the historic period of the architectural style of the building."

Accordingly, staff cannot recommend approval of the installation of simulated divided light windows which are a late 20th century building product. In the opinion of staff such windows alter the appearance of early 19th century residential building in fundamental ways. In a situation such as this staff would recommend the installation of single glazed true divided light wood windows with an interior energy panel.

New Door

In the opinion of staff the installation of a metal door is inappropriate. The *Design Guidelines*, state: "...metal doors are generally not appropriate on residential structures." Although the *Design Guidelines* recognize that metal doors may be used in rear yards in certain instance, in this case, given the fact that this is an early 19th century residential structure, staff cannot support the installation of a metal door.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy of more appropriate replacement materials.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

Code Enforcement:

No comments.

Historic Alexandria:

Installed windows are not consistent with BAR guidelines and approval for this application which required true divided light windows. They should be replaced with true divided light windows especially as they are located on the façade of the building. Regarding proposal for door replacement, a metal door might be suitable to avoid warping issues, but a solid door without windows would be more appropriate.